

MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK

DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK CONFERENCE CALL
July 10, 2008 11:00 A.M.
HELENA, MONTANA

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Department of Livestock Board Room

Technical difficulties delayed the meeting approximately 10 minutes while ten additional lines were added by Administrative Services

Call in attendees:

Board of Livestock and department personnel:

Bill Hedstrom, Meg Smith, Linda Nielsen, Janice French, George Hammond, Rebecca Weed, and Stan Boone; Christian Mackay; Dr. Marty Zaluski; Sherry Rust, secretary and minute taker

Public & organization representatives:

Dr. Susan Keller, North Dakota State Veterinarian
Rae Marie Gordon, Montana Stockgrowers Association
Charlene Rich, Montana Beef Council
Mary Ann, WIFE
Rebecca, Montana Farm Bureau
Russell Nimitz, Northern Broadcasting

The meeting began at 11:10.

Christian Mackay began by reviewing the purpose of the conference call.

- 1) review of the testing process and results so far in the brucellosis investigation
- 2) tri-state veterinarian meeting held about two weeks ago

Brucellosis Investigation

Overview of the investigation so far

- to date 870 head tested
- 633 negative results
- 1 herd just bled yesterday with results expected within the next two days
- One traceback herd of 184 head will be tested Saturday
- 1 other herd of about 88 head will test this fall (considered by APHIS as low risk herd)
- nothing suspect or need for follow-up on the negatives thus far

On potential depopulation of the index herd

- APHIS and producer agreed on an appraiser
- appraisal will be completed this weekend
- takes about two weeks to complete the appraisal

Mr. Mackay observed that DOL and APHIS field and office personnel worked well together, testing, identifying, communicating. They began with daily conference calls, then weekly with the next call scheduled for next Tuesday. Thus far, this positive is an isolated incident.

- The herd tested yesterday is a high risk herd because of the close contact with the index herd.
- He reported there are seven small trace outs for herds which received bulls or cows from the index herd that remain to be tested. They are considered low risk because of the timing involved.
- Herds already tested will need a six month assurance test. In the meantime quarantine will be lifted with herd plans in place

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- He also praised producers for their cooperation throughout this investigation process

Dr Zaluski added that the tested ranches were issued premises numbers and animals tagged with RFID provided by APHIS. Producers were very willing to participate in this way.

Tri-state Veterinarian Meeting

The state veterinarians and personnel attended from the states of Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana with the purpose of sharing processes and ideas regarding brucellosis risks and outbreaks.

Two states, Montana and Wyoming likely to lose Class Free status

- Wyoming's index herd of 650 animals is predominantly purebred stock
- 2 flagged Bio Bar 4
- an additional 25 plus 2 suspects
- 29 out of 650 head
- approximately the same percentage as Montana's one case out of 25 head

Informal information is that the Wyoming producer is reluctant to depopulate his herd because he has nothing to gain by depopulating as he will be facing the same risk as before.

Jan French asked if the Wyoming herd was close to the (Yellowstone) park.

- south of the park
- near Pinedale, Sublette County

Dr. Walt Cook, Wyoming State Veterinarian

- starting meeting of effort for years to come
- GYIBC is a forum for discussion and has not met for two or three year
- the tri-state group is an important step to plan how states can proceed

Reviewed during the meeting:

- shared information
- processes used in Wyoming and Idaho
- feed grounds
- marketability and how to address risk from wildlife
- split state status

1) Split State Status

- Idaho and Wyoming looked long and hard at it
- not inclined toward it

Dr. Logan spoke with APHIS regarding:

- designation of GYA as a high risk area
- the rest of the state not affected
- USDA doesn't provide confidence in this process

Question: How long to implement Split State Status?

- at least six months after losing Class Free status

Dr. Logan suggested the following in place of Split State Status:

- changes in UM&R and title 9 CFR
- some kind of interim policy between tri-states and APHIS

Board question: Which is a better a plan "high risk" area or split state regarding other states outlook?

Dr. Zaluski:

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- interim plan could serve as a template for changes in the UM&R and title 9 CFR

Dr. Susan Keller:

- North Dakota would sure look at it
- must focus on the real risk - wildlife in the (Yellowstone) park

Dr. Zaluski cited a "to do list"

1. continual communication - 3 meetings a year at rotating locations
2. GIS surveillance - mapping of occurrences showing boundaries
3. letter to congressional delegations of each state for Governor's signature for monetary support for management and disease control in wildlife.

Board question: Would these activities influence the process to get a signature on the MOU?

Dr. Zaluski:

- there would be individual MOUs between APHIS and each state

The MOU referred to is the GYIBC MOU

- Governor read the MOU
- would not sign without edits
- made edits and sent to Dr. Zaluski for edits (he will send copy to board members)

It was noted that no state was able to bring wildlife management representatives to the tri-state meeting.

- need to have wildlife involved
- producers have worked on their part
- wildlife managers need to participate

Christian provided information from the FWP meeting he attended in Bozeman the same day as the tri-state meeting:

- discussed enhancing surveillance in high risk regions
- more kiosks
- mail test kits to licensees
- gather more and better samples for better results
- lacking up to date sero-prevalence data

Dr. Zaluski pointed out the need to define whether we have wildlife prevalence and find the border where we have zero prevalence vs. seropositive

- waiting on "hoofprinting" analysis on the '08 strain
- then will try to match with other samples
- using new and better techniques will go back and rematch '07 samples

Board observation: Herds in Idaho and Wyoming had not had bison contact so it has to be cattle or other wildlife.

- do specific (targeted) testing to high risk area
- set up incentives for early detection and control

Dr. Zaluski said accurate boundary and pro-active pursuit in those areas are part of the long term solution. The states have drawn their own lines because we have not provided accurate boundary data. If we provide data, they may look positively on boundaries.

Board question: Are we going to pursue "brucellosis review"?

Dr. Zaluski:

- Idaho suggested we review their action plan to assure all pertinent components are included prior to request for review
- FWP requested to review document thru third party to assure verification if DOL concludes wildlife a causative factor.

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Board request: Copy of all Executive Officer or DOL correspondence received regarding the brucellosis incident. Mr. Mackay will forward requested documents

Chairman called for questions or comments from the public.

Adjournment Chairman Bill Hedstrom adjourned the meeting at.12:10 p.m.

BILL HEDSTROM, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF LIVESTOCK